

Press Release



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Announcing Recognition Award Winners 2017

28th October, 2017
Lilongwe, Malawi



(L-R) Honourable Bright Msaka with the overall winner of the RUFORUM IMPRESSA AWARDS 2017: Prof Brice Sinsin, Rector, Université d'Abomey-Calavi. Photo Credit: Go Trolley Films

During the just concluded RUFORUM 13th Annual General Meeting in Malawi this week, RUFORUM recognised individuals making a contribution in transforming their communities and institutions. A total of ten (10) awards were given during the official opening ceremony here in Lilongwe, Malawi. As a Network, RUFORUM periodically recognizes individuals and groups who have made significant contributions to development in the continent, and to their own countries, institutions, and society. We do this to appreciate their contribution, and promote excellence and giving back to Society.

Present at the handing over ceremony were Honourable Bright Msaka, SC, Minister of Education, Science and Technology, Government of Malawi; Honourable George Kronnisanyon Werner, Minister of Education, Government of Liberia; Honourable Dr. Muyingo John Chrysostom, Minister of State for Higher Education, Government of Uganda; and over 300 participants that included Vice Chancellors representing the 66 member universities, development partners and other dignitaries.

This year, RUFORUM recognised three categories of achievers: First, RUFORUM recognized five outstanding model farmers in Malawi that were identified by the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development. Nominations were received from all the 29 districts in Malawi. Each farmer received US\$1000 and a recognition award. The Deputy Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Dr. Dan Gustafson handed over the awards to the winning farmers, namely:

1. Ngabaghila Chatata, Thanthwe Enterprises
2. Ruth Kalima, Roseberry Farms
3. Dupo Mhlanga, Dika Mhlanga Village, TA Mtwalo, Mzimba
4. Arnold Kasumbu, Chakhuntha Village, TA Chiseka, Lilongwe
5. Grace Malikebu, Malonje Village, GVH Chopi, TA Malemia, Zomba

Secondly, two Outstanding Young Scientists making significant contribution to research and development in Malawi were recognised. They were identified by the National Commission for Science and Technology, Malawi. Each scientist received US\$1000 and a recognition award. Honourable George Kronnisanyon Werner, Minister of Education, Government of Liberia and Honourable Dr. Muyingo John Chrysostom, Minister of State for Higher Education, Government of Uganda handed over the awards to the winning scientists, namely:

1. Dr. Chomora Mikera, Senior Lecturer in Physics and Deputy Dean of Science - University of Malawi, Chancellor College
2. Dr. Tiwonge Davies Manda, Senior Lecturer in Computer Science and Head of Computer Science - University of Malawi, Chancellor College

Finally RUFORUM recognised the IMPRESSA Award winners. This was the fourth competition that RUFORUM has established to recognize outstanding university leaders and faculty staff for their contribution to university advancement in terms of leadership, research, training and outreach and indeed to society. This competition was managed by the RUFORUM Secretariat supported by seven independent international evaluators. A total of 12 nominations were submitted. Honourable Bright Msaka, SC, Minister of Education, Science and Technology, Government of Malawi handed over the awards to the three winners:

1. Overall Winner: Prof Brice Sinsin, Rector, University of Abomey Calavi in the Republic of Benin, who received US\$20,000
2. First Runner up: Prof Peter Mbatj, Vice Chancellor and Principal, University of Venda, in South Africa who received US\$15,000
3. Second Runner up: Associate Professor Fetien Abay Abera, Vice President, Mekelle University in Ethiopia who received US\$10,000

The RUFORUM Network congratulates the 2017 winners.

Notes to Editors:

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) is a network of 83 African Universities with mission to ‘strengthen the capacities of Universities to foster innovations responsive to demands of small-holder farmers through the training of high quality researchers, the output of impact oriented research and the maintenance of collaborative working relations among researchers, farmers, national agricultural research institutions’. RUFORUM was established in 2004, with Secretariat hosted by Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda. RUFORUM signed MoU with the African Union and has mandate to support capacity building for science, research and technology development in Africa. RUFORUM has supported the training of over 1500 postgraduate students, the generation of over 300 agricultural technologies and mobilized over US\$70 million for strengthening postgraduate education in Africa. Please visit www.ruforum.org for more information.

For additional information, photos and interviews with key delegates, contact Ms Joan Apio, Communications Publicity and Marketing Officer, below.

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